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The Radical Power of Education—Brief

Arindam Nandi
Population Council

Nicole Haberland
Population Council

Thoai Ngo
Population Council

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THE RADICAL POWER OF EDUCATION

Arindam Nandi, Nicole Haberland, & Thoai D. Ngo

Gender, Education, Justice, and Equity Initiative (GEJE)
Population Council



The GEJE innovation hub focuses on tackling the global learning crisis and inequities in participation.

The world is in a global learning crisis. Approximately 502 million children (or 2 out of every 3 children in LMICs) face learning poverty – the number of students who are unable to read and understand simple text by age ten.¹

Low educational attainment and low literacy excludes children from the freedoms that come with learning and leave vast social and economic potential untapped.

People who receive more years of education are more likely to have better health outcomes, participate in civic life, and their children are more likely to be healthier and receive more education.²⁻⁵ A single year of education has been estimated to increase individual earnings by 10%, and that figure is up to 15% among women in Africa.^{6,7}

To equip policymakers, advocates, funders, and private sector and nonprofit actors with insights into the extensive impacts of quality education, GEJE researchers used predictive models to estimate the comprehensive economic and social benefits of 12 years of universal education for individuals, communities, and societies.

12 YEARS OF UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION COULD...

Increase GNI in low- and middle-income countries by

\$8.1
trillion annually

Learning and Beyond: The Multidimensional Benefits

Powerful findings from GEJE's predictive models offer a glimpse into a potential future for the rising generation if the global community commits to making universal quality education a reality for all children.

Economic Benefits

Previous estimates show that 12 years of universal quality education could lift 420 million people out of poverty.⁸ GEJE findings demonstrate a similarly large impact. We illustrate that universal secondary education among young adults aged 15–24 years in LMICs could boost annual gross national income (GNI) by \$8.1 trillion, which represents an estimated 11.5% growth.



"The Radical Power of Education" research brief summarizes the findings of GEJE's recent report on the impact of education across society. The authors thank Joyce Altman, Matthew Harvey, Meredith Kozak, Joe Shaffner, and Corinne White for their helpful feedback, edits, and visual designs. Download the full report [here](#) or use the QR code on the right.

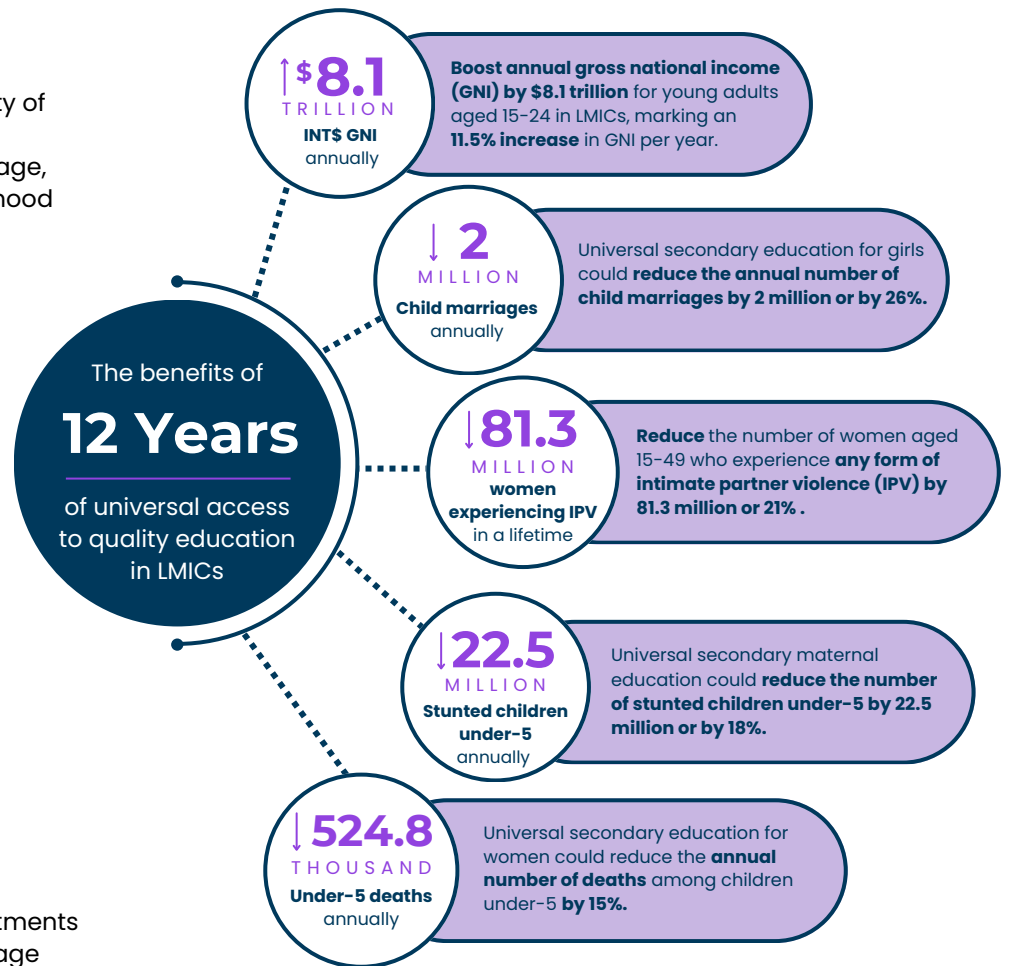
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Social and Health Benefits

Education improves well-being and quality of life and reduces harm. Our results project substantial global impacts on child marriage, intimate partner violence (IPV), and childhood health:

- Reducing the number of child marriages by 2 million annually.
- Reducing the number of women aged 15-49 who experience any form of IPV by 81.3 million.
- Reducing the annual number of deaths among children under the age of 5 years by 524,834 and the number of stunted children under-5 by 22.5 million.



Accelerate Investment in Education Now

Universal secondary education could be achieved through a combination of investments and evidence-based programs that: engage children at an early age starting with preschool education; provide free, high-quality schooling at elementary and higher levels; and reduce economic, gender, and other sociocultural barriers so that all children can remain in school and effectively progress through grades.

Greater investments in quality education, directed to effective programs, are long overdue. The urgent need for global investment in education is paramount for ensuring that the rising generation is equipped with vital foundational skills, values of equity, and critical thinking skills, preparing them to succeed in a 21st-century landscape increasingly shaped by the climate crisis and by escalating social and economic challenges.

Shaping a Just World: Building Foundational Skills, Equity, and Critical Thinking for All Children

The GEJE innovation hub focuses on tackling the global learning crisis and inequities in participation. GEJE generates data and insights on the ripple effects of education, unpacks how progress in education can translate into economic and social equity, and identifies programs that are working to eliminate inequity and injustice.

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